

VZCZCXYZ0013
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHDG #2291 2831916
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 101916Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9355
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS SANTO DOMINGO 002291

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAIR](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [DR](#)
SUBJECT: THE SKIES ARE SAFE AGAIN: DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT
REPAIRS MAIN RADAR

REF: A. A. SANTO DOMINGO 1850
[1](#)B. B. SANTO DOMINGO 2051

[1](#)1. The director of the Dominican Civil Aviation Institute (IDAC) called EconOff on October 8 to inform the Embassy that it had successfully finished repairs to the country's primary radar at Las Americas Airport outside of Santo Domingo, which had been partially inoperable for over a year. To announce this achievement IDAC held a press conference on October 8 aimed at bolstering public confidence in Dominican air safety standards. Concern about the air safety and financial ramifications of delays in repairing the radar for U.S. air carriers had been raised by the Embassy on several occasions with IDAC, including in a letter dated August 7, 2007 and in a courtesy call with the new director of IDAC on August 30 (See reftels). In the courtesy call, the new director, Jose Tomas Perez, pledged to make repairing the radar his top priority. While outside opinion (i.e., airport management) had predicted it might take months for the new director to get the radar repaired as a result of difficulties with the contractor employed for the work, the speed with which the repairs were completed demonstrates that Tomas Perez appears to be a man of his word. The operations manager for Las Americas Airport confirmed to EconOff that the radar is functioning properly, and that while there may be some minor tweaking still to be done on the system, IDAC appears to have resolved the problem. Ultimately, however, IDAC is interested in purchasing new radar arrays to replace the older French radar technology they have installed.
GOUCHNOUR